

REFERENCE 17SITE NAME HIMCO DUMPSITE ID IND 9200-7217

April 5, 1977

TO: Hon. Otis R. Bowen, M. D.  
Governor, State of Indiana

FROM: William T. Paynter, M. D.,  
State Health Commissioner

SUBJECT: Response to Mrs. Patricia Rumsfelt's Letter  
of March 1, 1977

The staff of the Solid Waste Management Section has expended considerable time and effort investigating the complaints and sampling surface and groundwater in the area of the Himco Disposal site. We believe that the best response we can make is to cite a brief history of the situation.

1. The open dump was initially identified on August 24, 1971. General refuse and pharmaceutical wastes (aspirin, ~~Exaltine~~) were deposited in a swampy area northwest of the intersection of County Road 10 and the Nappanee bypass.
2. Several inspections were conducted in 1971 through 1974 to bring the site into compliance with current standards.
3. On April 18, 1974, a representative took water samples of surface water as well as five of six residential wells adjacent to the landfill. The wells are said to be shallow driven wells ranging from 62 feet to 22 feet in depth. No reference was made of the sanitary construction of these wells prior to sampling.
4. On April 26, 1974, we received letters from Mrs. Rumsfelt and three other individuals concerning odorous, cloudy water in their private wells. This was confirmed to be true.
5. Before the water sample testing was completed, our office recommended that Mr. Charles Himes, the owner and operator of the disposal site, provide additional wells for the six affected residents.
6. Water sample results from the April 18, 1974, sampling show the shallow wells to be high in chemical oxygen demand and manganese. Surface water was shown to be grossly contaminated.

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7. On November 14, 1974, three additional wells were sampled which were located within one-quarter mile from the site. They were found to be high in manganese (.60 ppm) content.
  8. Within a two-week period between May 2, 1974, and May 14, 1974, Mr. Himes had wells drilled for the six residents adjacent to the landfill:
    - a. Warren Wiseman - R.R. #6, Box 379, C.R. #10
    - b. Ansel H. Elwell - R.R. #6, Box 378, C.R. #10
    - c. Robert B. Whitmer - R.R. #6, Box 380, C.R. #10
    - d. Herman Rumsfelt - R.R. #6, Box 377, C.R. #10
    - e. Noble L. Bowers - R.R. #6, Box 382, C.R. #10
    - f. James K. Kolanoski - R.R. #6, Box 381, C.R. #10
- These wells were all 152 feet deep or better through a clay barrier which should isolate the new aquifer. Two of these wells equalled or slightly exceeded the recommended public health service drinking water standard for iron (0.3 ppm and 0.7 ppm).
9. Due to the poor geological characteristics, on July 2, 1974, our office requested that the site cease operation by December 31, 1974. This was later extended to March 1, 1975, at which time only inert materials and calcium sulfate would be deposited.
  10. On February 18, 1975, a consent agreement was signed by Mr. Charles Himes, and adopted by the Stream Pollution Control Board. By September 25, 1975, a new landfill was to have been established and the old one closed.
  11. Water samples of the deep wells were again taken on May 16, 1975, and all six samples were satisfactory.
  12. Our Hearing Commissioner advised us that the Consent Order could be verbally extended until December 1, 1975. Mr. Himes was notified of this decision. The operation was allowed to continue until September 27, 1976, pending zoning appeal and new site preparations.
  13. On October 25, 1976, we received a copy of private well water sample results from the six shallow wells of the above individuals. Only Warren Wiseman's new deep well was sampled. The results were satisfactory as in the previous testing.
  14. An inspection on September 17, 1976, revealed that refuse is no longer deposited at this site. Final cover (two feet), grading, and seeding, had not been completed.

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## Summary:

We agree with Mrs. Rumsfelt in that the shallow well water is objectionable to drink. This opinion is based primarily upon the off color and the odor of the well water. Chemical samples indicate a high COD and manganese content. As a result, Himco, Inc., provided deep wells for these individuals which now supply safe water to their homes. A sample of one deep well was supplied to us on October 21, 1976, which indicates that the water is still satisfactory. The Rumsfelts, the Wisemans, the Kolanoskis are now suing Himco, Inc., and several other individuals to recover previous damages. Their requests for water samples may be for use as court evidence in proving their allegations of leachate contamination.

The City of Elkhart has requested that the U.S. Geological Survey conduct an extensive ground water sampling program at two locations within the county. They are concerned whether the Himco Disposal and an industrial disposal site in the eastern area of the county are causing groundwater contamination and, if so, how will they affect the municipal well. The U.S. Geological Survey is scheduled to undertake this project in the spring.

Attachment